

August 15, 1973

Dear John,

Continuing to indulge my escapist fantasies by buying myself in readings from the 17th Century, I came across a reference that might interest you. It is contained in James Leasor's The Plague and the Fire, an Avon Paperback book (The Hearst Corporation, 572 Madison Ave., New York, 1961) and may be the first, or at least one of the earliest complaints about pollution. Leasor is quoting from John Evelyn, a 17th Century diarist, who in 1661 wrote a pamphlet, Fumifugium complaining about air pollution and smoke in London. Leasor quotes, "This horrid smoke obscures our churches and makes our palaces look old. It fouls our clothes and corrupts the waters, so that the very rain and refreshing dews that fall in the several seasons precipitate this impure vapour, which with its black and tenacious quality, spots and contaminates whatever is exposed to it."

Leasor doesn't mention whether it is in English or Latin, but I assume as a pamphlet aimed at the commoner people it would be in English. Leasor also doesn't mention where one might get a hold of a copy of the full pamphlet. But it caught my attention and I thought it might interest you. Leasor also has some great descriptions on sanitation and crowding in London (before the plague).

Again, my thanks for a really great summer. I have really been depressed at what is happening to the union and being forced to leave the fields and had little enthusiasm for returning to school. You (and the music festival) made my return and my summer quite exciting and delightful. I still have guilt feelings about not being on the picket line, but if one is going to escape into the 16th Century or 17th Century or academia, one might as well enjoy oneself. Again, my thanks...

Regards to Sue and the Dolphins....

Viva la Causa...

Doug Adair